

## References:

- Aldrovandi, U. 1636. *Ornithologiae hoc est de Avibus historiae libri*. Vol. 3 Bologna.  
Carnoy, A. 1976. *Dictionnaire étymologique de la Mythologie Gréco-Romaine*. Edit. Universitas, Louvain.  
Graves, R. 1985. *Los mitos griegos*. Alianza Editorial, Madrid.  
Jobling, J. A. 1991. *A Dictionary of Scientific Bird Names*. Oxford Univ. Press.  
Kury, M. da G. 1992. *Dicionário de mitologia grega e romana*. Jorge Zahar Editor, Rio de Janeiro.

Seção de Ornitologia, Museu Nacional,  
Quinta da Boa Vista,  
Rio de Janeiro (RJ),  
20940-040 Brazil.

DANTE MARTINS TEIXEIRA

21 April 1995

---

A FIFTH SPECIMEN OF THE TAHITI PARAKEET

The Tahiti Parakeet *Cyanoramphus zealandicus* (Latham, 1790) was a small, drab parrot which was probably endemic in Tahiti. It seemed never to have been numerous, and disappeared by the middle of the nineteenth century. Only four specimens of it were known until now, three in Britain and one in France. Two of the British specimens, one of which is the presumed type, are in the Merseyside County Museum, and the third in the Natural History Museum (Tring); all of them were brought back by the naturalists who accompanied Captain Cook, in the eighteenth century. The French specimen is kept in the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle (Paris). It is one of three specimens collected in 1844 by Lieutenant J. de Marolles, and nothing is known of what happened to the two others (Greenway 1958, Jouanin 1962, Fuller 1987, Forshaw 1989, Knox & Walters 1994).

The specimen discovered by one of us (D.M.) in the collections of the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle de Perpignan (France) (Voisin *et al.* 1995) has certainly nothing to do with de Marolle's birds, as it was collected two years earlier by G. Amadis, who, as a member of the expedition of the French Frigate "la Vénus", under the command of Admiral A. A. Dupetit-Thouars, stayed in Tahiti in 1842. This fifth specimen is in very good condition with its colours still fresh; its rather worn rectrices suggest that it was kept in a cage for some time. Its measurements are: culmen 19.5 mm, tarsus 22.5 mm, wing *c.* 140 mm (approximate measurement in order not to damage the specimen). There is no indication of locality or date on the stand, but from the Catalogues we know that this specimen entered the Muséum in 1845, probably in late September or early October.

We are glad to thank here the Association des Amis du Muséum, who kindly funded the visit of C. and J.-F. Voisin to Perpignan, as well as Prof. R. Bourgat, Curator of the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle of that town, and his staff for their warm reception and facilities to work.

## References:

- Forshaw, J. M. 1989. *Parrots of the World*. 3rd edn. Willoughby, Lansdowne.  
Fuller, E. 1987. *Extinct birds*. Viking/Rainbird.

- Greenway, J. C. 1958. *Extinct and Vanishing Birds of the World*. American Committee for International Wildlife Protection, New York.
- Jouanin, Chr. 1962. Inventaire des oiseaux éteints ou en voie de d'extinction conservés au Muséum de Paris. *Terre et Vie* 3: 257–301.
- Knox, A. G. & Walters, M. P. 1994. Extinct and endangered birds in the collections of the Natural History Museum. *Brit. Orn. Club. Occ. Pub.* 1.
- Voisin, C., Voisin, J.-F. & Mary, D. 1995. La collection d'oiseaux du Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle de Perpignan, première partie. *Ann. Mus. Hist. Nat. Perpignan* 5: 33–44.

Laboratoire de Zoologie,  
Mammifères et Oiseaux,  
Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle,  
55 rue de Buffon,  
F-75005 Paris,  
France.

CLAIRE & JEAN-FRANÇOIS VOISIN

Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle,  
c/o Mairie de Perpignan, B.P. 931,  
F-66020 Perpignan,  
France.

DIDIER MARY

21 May 1995

## BOOKS RECEIVED

del Hoyo, J., Elliott, A. & Sargatal, J. (eds) 1994. *Handbook of the Birds of the World*. Vol. 2, New World Vultures to Guinea-fowl. Pp. 640, 60 colour plates, 302 photographs, 590 distribution maps, more than 7000 bibliographical references. ISBN 84-87334-15-6. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona. £98. 31 × 24 cm.

This magnificently presented volume forms the second part of a series prepared in collaboration with BirdLife International (previously ICBP). The series is now expected to extend to twelve volumes, following a comprehensive revision of the whole project and taking into account experience gained from Vol. 1 (reviewed in *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club* 1993 (2)). The principal object of HBW, as it has come to be referred to, is stated to be the maximum exchange of ornithological information without attempting to adjudicate between the scientific merits of different avian classifications. In this it succeeds admirably.

A 6-page introduction follows the Foreword by Walter J. Bock, participating in the capacity of Consultant for Systematics and Nomenclature, an important innovation in Vol. 2. The detailed general introduction to the whole series (pp. 15–33 of Vol. 1) is not repeated as the treatment is essentially the same and will remain so throughout the series. Other important innovations have occurred in Vol. 2, the most significant being extensive internationalisation of the team of authors.

Taxonomy is considered to be one of the major concerns of the whole project. As explained in Vol. 1, HBW follows, for its basic overriding principle of covering all living species rather than all recent species, the currently accepted standard sequence of the Class Aves (Mayr & Bock) with limited modification where recent work shows it to be appropriate. Hence, although New World Vultures (Cathartidae) are now generally reckoned to be allied to the Storks (Ciconiidae), they are treated traditionally within Falconiformes although discussed fully in the family text. On the other hand, New World Quails are given fully family status, with the recognition of a narrower concept of the Phasianidae. The Hoatzin presents a difficult case, being placed in an order of its own, Opisthocomiformes, alongside the Galliformes. Of interest is the inclusion of a newly described African perdicine, *Xenoperdix udzungwensis*, so distinctive as to have been placed in a genus of its own.